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DE RUEHLM #0417 1191141  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 281141Z APR 08  
FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8050  
INFO RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 0860  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 7853  
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU PRIORITY 6034  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 4369  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 1991  
RUEHNY/AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY 4366  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 3461  
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI PRIORITY 8458  
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI PRIORITY 5925  
RUEHON/AMCONSUL TORONTO PRIORITY 0632  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 2733  
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 000417

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DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/INS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/28/2018  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PHUM](#) [MOPS](#) [CE](#)  
SUBJECT: SRI LANKA: BUS BOMBING KILLS 26

REF: COLOMBO 00352

Classified By: Ambassador Robert O. Blake, Jr., for reasons 1.4(b,d).

[11](#). (U) On April 25, a bomb exploded on a packed, evening rush-hour bus in Piliyandala, a suburb 15 km south of Colombo. Twenty-six people were killed, and 64 injured. The bus was traveling from the outskirts of Colombo to Kahapola, a village east of the city. Police have arrested nine suspects in connection with the bombing. The government blames the LTTE for the attack.

[12](#). (U) President Rajapaksa said in a statement on April 26 that the attack showed "the terrorists had once again resorted to killing innocent civilians in the face of heavy setbacks on the battlefield." A military spokesman echoed this message, saying the LTTE "will resort to these kinds of attacks when they are losing."

[13](#). (C) COMMENT: Friday night's attack comes less than three weeks after the April 6 LTTE suicide assassination of Minister for Highways Jeyaraj Fernandopulle and 13 others (reftel). It is likely the work of the LTTE, which seldom claims responsibility for its attacks. The GSL is attempting to frame the bombing as an indication that the LTTE is becoming more desperate as it faces increasing pressure in the North. This claim, however, rings hollow in the wake of the military's significant losses in Muhamalai on April 23.  
BLAKE